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NO. 8

The
LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

John Northern Hilliard | Myrtle Levy Gaylord

Antoinette DeCoursey Patterson | Lois Atkins

Lily B. Campbell and others

VACHEL LINDSAY-COLLECTED POEMS

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The Lyric West

Vol. III, No. 8

A Magazine Of Verse

December, 1923

Edited by Grace Atherton Dennen

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John Northern Hilliard

Gifts

I have no gifts of ivory or gold,
Or stones of worth to lay before you, dear;
No triple plate nor treasures manifold,
Nor have I bonds and deeds with titles clear.

I have no coffered wealth of mart or mine;
Nor have I emeralds or rubies rare,
Or flaming opals, set in suave design,
To weave into your wondrous waves of hair.

No twinkling silks from Eastern looms have I,
No bales of scented merchandise nor myrrh
Nor frankincense nor dreamy gum and dye
To sleek your limbs, nor musk and lavender.

But gifts I bring of greater worth than these—
Silver of moonlight, fairy gold in bars
Forged of the dawn, pearls from the Pleiades,
And robes spun out of countless skeins of stars.

Words, too, I bring, words delicate and blue
As dust from summer skies, gold as ripe wheat,
Words fragrant as are all my thoughts of you,
And sweet as all the air you touch is sweet.

Such are my gifts to you—just dreams and words,

Just words and dreams—but oh, my dear, what king
With all his heaped up hoard, his flocks and herds,
Can buy the least of all these gifts I bring!

Siddie Joe Johnson

The Carpenter

To me, there is a simple beauty in the thought
That I am of a race of men whose hands have toiled
The whole day through and stopped for naught,
Their hands becoming gnarled as is the wood—
The fragrant wood. I love the things new made,
And smelling faintly of the Spring. I love the men—
The earnest men who know the trade
Followed by Him of Nazareth.

Within the cluttered fragrance of the little shop,
Are faces all contentment as they work. I see
Amid the shavings as they drop,
Another shop in ages long gone by—
Another shop, and by His foster-father's side,
Learning of him and always helping as He learned,
(While Mary watched with eyes of pride!)
The Holy Lad of Nazareth

It is a wealth of hidden pleasure just to know
The well loved, long familiar task a hallowed thing—
Hallowed by the Hands that came to show
The print of nails not driven by Himself.
Again, 'tis sweet to know that one day He

Handled the tools and fresh, sweet wood in just this
way,
The while He thought of things to be.
The Carpenter of Nazareth!

Josephine Van Dolzen Pease

Natale

In every darkness
Shall burn a Star.
Song shall break
All silence,
And with despair shall walk
The Vision

Josephine Van Dolzen Pease

Noel

The air is flame of candle glory,
Wing of heaven throng.
The stars are splendor trumpet gold
That angels play upon.
The sky is deep, and Christmas green,
And fair Lady-blue.
The night is made of white Hosts
With God shining thru.

Julia Powell

Gifts

The great kings brought
To his blessed nativity,
Fire engemmed
Gold and chalcedony,
Dreaming attars
In vases of porphyry.

But I shall bring
A flower as blue
As veil of Madonna,
A song that is new,
A little white lamb
All wet with the dew.

Oscar Williams

At Love's Door

We hear the little eager knocks,
But still we cannot say, "Come in!"
To those poor wanderers called words,
Who wish to view the wealth within.

For from some world we know not of
Into the room a Presence slips,
Who looks on us with God-filled eyes
And holds a finger to his lips!

Clare Shipman

In the Light of Christmas Candles

The shabby house was mean and small.
It had no beauty of its own at all.
You thought it worthy, though, to wreath the shelf
With crow's-foot, and the beauty of yourself.
Nothing was missed of radiancy and glow.
Your courage wrapped it from the sleet and snow.
Your deft hands garnered fragrant order there.
Your sweetness trailed upon the narrow stair.

Here in the long room's silver candle light
The waxen flames blur in a net of tears.
A sudden arrow wings its pain tonight
Down the long course of dim and silent years,
Remembering the house your courage kept aglow,
Its holly wreaths set brave against the sleet and snow.

Margaret Tod Ritter

Sonnet of Undefeat

My yesterday is shadowed in your eyes
Silently beautiful; it lingers near
The portals of today seeking to hear
Itself played over; seeking to surprise
Some echo of itself within the slow,
Uprising prelude of your widening glance,
As when some brief, retreating shadow-dance
Leaps up from morning embers. Who can know
At what far hour yesterday will be
Content to die completely from your gaze?
Volcanoes smolder aeons and amaze
The world with fire; the same with ecstasy.
Let those of little faith bewail their dead;
I face tomorrow with an unbowed head.

Sydney King Russell

Alms

“Silver and gold have I none”

It was long and long ago

That Peter spoke to the lame man

Who cried out in his woe;

A beggar, who sat imploring

His alms of passers-by

There at the gate called Beautiful,—

“But such as I have, give I!”

“Such as I have!”—The lame man raised

Expectant eyes to trace

The gleam of coin; but there instead

The light of God in a face!

The light of God, and the firm command,—

“In the name of Jesus Christ

Of Nazareth, arise and walk!”—

And lo, the Word sufficed!

The lame man leaped, to learn anew

The joy of paths untrod;

“Silver and gold have I none,—”

But ah, the alms of God!

E. MacAlister Hepburn

To Her Whose Lover Lies Dead

Would it matter to the young queen
Who has put aside her jewels,
And walks in dust-gray garments
Through emptiness, fringed by remembering. . . .

Would it matter to the young queen
That folk who never saw her face
Think of her with gentle pity
Now the good king is dead?

Julia Powell

Wild Weather

Thud of rain upon the roof—

And I have left unlatched my door,

And set a candle like a star

Above the darkness of the moor.

Some one may have no place to go,

Nor thatch nor hedge to break the
storm,

My door will answer to a touch,

My little house is sweet and warm.

All that I have is for the giving,

Bread and bed and fire and light,

For sake of one dear wanderer—

God, send him back to me tonight!

Myrtle Levy Gaylord

I Would Be Silent

I would be silent

As the stars and pines are silent
On a windless night.

For words dwarf thought,
Belittle it and twist it into strange shapes;
Even as thought itself
Strives to force into a small circle of light
A shadowy, larger consciousness,
An unknowing wisdom that darkly gropes,
But sometimes touches—God.

I would be silent

As the stars and pines are silent
On a windless night.

Poems

My poems are a pain and a despair,
And a joy without a name, that laughs and
sings.

They are a sorrow, more than I can bear,
They come to me on little broken wings,
And beat and beat against my aching breast,
And break my heart because they cannot fly:
Poor little tired things that come for rest,
And plead for me to hold them lest they die.

I think some day that God will heal their
wings,
And take my poems,—take them one by one,
Each throbbing song that laughs and cries and
sings,
And loose them out beyond the farthest sun,—
Then—like an empty nest on some stark
bough,
Perhaps I shall find rest at last—somehow.

Claribel W. Avery

Brave Beauty

Let me be brave as the last blue morning glory
That looks toward the sun,
When the wailing winds and falling leaves of autumn
Tell that its day is done.

Let me be brave as a red rose from the garden,
Plucked in its hour of pride,
That crimsons still above a languid bosom
In which the heart has died.

Let me be brave—not stolid like a mountain,
Nor rough and overbearing like a wave.
Give me the sweet endurance of a flower,
Lovely, yet brave.

Idella Purnell

Music

Your hands are music, moving through
The white keys and the black,
And hearing you, there is no wine,
No sacrament, I lack.

The little house with quiet walls
Grows taller than the dome
Of any gilded, Raphael-wrought
Cathedral of old Rome.

And from a mosaic window's arch,
A mystic avenue,
The radiance of the day's white light
Goldenly pours through.

Lovers of all time are there,
In that golden street
Drifting, drifting, drifting down,
With holy, gentle feet.

Petrarch and his Laura come,
Milton, with his Eve. . . .
Abelard and Heloise
Now no longer grieve.

For they are fair as poplar trees,

Like May, they all are young.
They have come together there
Through music you have sung.

Lovers of an old time . . .
Drifting, drifting down.
Beatrice's wine-red dress
Is her bridal gown.

Lovers from the old time,
A golden avenue . . .
Now they face, and leave the arch
With white light pouring through.

Softer in the keys now
Your wizard-fingers pass. . . .
The music fades. . . . The picture fades
Into the window-glass.

And this is just a small house,
With piano, fire, and you. . . .
But in the night, the young house smiles
To know what dreams can do.

Elizabeth J. Coatsworth

The Three Gifts

THE fairies gave him a little sharp sword,
The fairies gave him a little white bride,
And the fairies gave him a black, black horse
For him to ride.

He thanked the fairies most decorously,
He fastened the little sharp sword to his side,
And he put the reins of the black, black horse
In the hands of his bride.

All day the dust of the highway rose
To the great black horse's magnificent stride,
All night he lay asleep in the arms
Of his fairy bride.

But in the dawn the little sharp sword
Was softly drawn from his sleeping side,
And by her little white magical hands,
In sleep, he died.

The little sword sang at the taste of blood,
And she rode laughing who never had cried,
But the black, black horse went heavy and slow
With a stumbling stride.

Marvin Luter Hill

The Doubter

Death has blown her candle out—

As she was before

She was born, so is she now;

Never any more

Will she sail upon the sea,

Or walk upon the shore.

She is nothing, less than dust

Yet, a little wind

Tags at me when I go out,

Saying, “Glance behind

Where she follows!”—then it sighs:

“You are blind, blind.”

And when I come home at dusk

Often do I hear

Shadow-footsteps, and I feel

Something drawing near—

A voice whispers at my heart,

Saying: “Dearest dear!”

Harold Vinal

Sonnet

O thou wert sweeter than an hundred flowers,
Fairer than Spring, more exquisite and chaste
Than Easter lilies, though time has erased
Your body's whiteness, I remember hours
Of troubled loveliness, the burning taste
Of sweet, warm kisses, the dear memory
Of your swift glory, when you looked at me—
The beating pain, when we at last embraced.
O thou wert sweeter than a clear June night,
Heavy with poignant roses, blown to bloom
And fairer far than lilac and the white
Branches of windy things that sway and swoon.
O you were all that Spring could ever give,—
Too beautiful to die, too chaste to live.

Eda Lou Walton

Upon Reading the Browning Letters

When I am smirched and mocked by my own pain
And cannot lift my lips even to a flower,
I read your living letters for an hour.
And faith comes back again.

Even though my life is blinded, cannot see,
Even though my spirit dies each day anew,
Love is not dead for love has lived in you
And what has been, may be.

There is this wonder yet, Dear God, this wonder yet,
Fruitful of worship and of deep relief,
There has been love beyond the soul's belief,
There has been beauty one cannot forget.

Beth Cheney Nichols

The Torch

i

My soul is a candle, tall and white,
My heart is a taper of golden light,
And all my life is bright,
Bright with a flame that leaps to
song.

But the world is holding a purple mist
Of sacred shadows, wide and long,
Because my lover and I have kissed,
My lover and I in a shaded porch
Have kissed!
And now a torch
Is this—

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Beth Cheney Nichols

MY SONG!

Antoinette DeCoursey Patterson

In Old Siena

This is the ancient story,—
When the dust is blown away
That hides the pride and glory
Of Siena's yesterday:—

Awakening from her slumbers,
Hundreds of years ago,
She sees in countless numbers
Close at her gates her foe,

The hosts of Florence,—wielding
Power without parallel;—
To keep those gates from yielding,
Who'll work the miracle!

Through streets and blackening grasses,
Dim in the pale star-shine,
The people flock in masses
To their loved Madonna's shrine.

And on their knees before her,
They vow, through all the days
Siena shall adore her
With constant prayer and praise.

If she, Christ's radiant Mother,

Will look from her throne above,
And fires of fury smother,
And save the homes they love.

Then, sure of her infinite pity
For this their stricken land,
They give the keys of the city
Into Madonna's hand.

Such faith proved no illusion,
Saved were their homes and vines;—
We read,—in wild confusion
They fled, the Florentines.

And as I walked one morning
Siena's oldest street,
A new and bright adorning
My glances chanced to meet:

It was her children, laden
With roses white and red;
Stopping a little maiden,—
“What are they for?” I said.

Like bells of a tambourina,
The child's voice rang out clear;
“*Por nostra Madonnina*—
The flowers that we have here.

“We love to bring her roses,
For when our city's keys

She holds, no gate uncloses
To wicked enemies.

She's in that old church yonder—
We go there every day
To gaze on her, and wonder
At all her care, and pray.”—

Far from Italian places
My lot today is cast;
But when my memory traces
Those happy months now past,

Clear as a tambourina
Still echoes down the hours,
“Por nostra Madonnina—
We love to bring her flowers.”

Henrietta C. Penny

The North Wind

The storm has passed, leaving a clear bright day,
Save rustling leaves the forest trail is still.
But the rude wind yet works his noisy will
In the tall trees that rise along our way.
It seems not wind but surf on rocky shore,
Such is the rythm of its mighty tones,
Striking the leaves like waves on rolling stones,
Then falling into silence from the roar.
Ah! yes, the “Winds of God” his praise do speak,
As if in Gothic dome I knelt to pray
I hear their anthem in the trees to-day.
“The Lord is great and good, though man is weak.”
Oh! mighty wind! it does my soul rejoice
That I have heard on forest trails your voice.

Helen Frazee-Bower

Winter Night in San Francisco Harbor

The ship casts anchor. . . . Down an empty plain,
The sand-beach runs to silver; and beyond,
The fishers' hovels, weeping with the rain
That floods their eaves, make each a little pond.
As though for warmth and comfort gained of them
The hunch-back city huddles in a heap
Against the hills; and circling like a hem
The silent shore, is silence of the deep.

By momentary contact nearer drawn,
The rich, the poor, and those who love to roam,
Sleep side by side. The same rain falls upon
Palace and cottage—and a ship come home.
And men, whose lives too narrow are to share,
In dreams touch hands with all who slumber there.

William Ellwell Onions

Wind

Whipped short, as a loose sail,
The broken voices echo in the gale
Through my eyes,
And then, through my ears,
And then, with my lips.
The voices rise,
Are checked, are flung along the years;—
Nay! I'll hear them with my finger tips
Though I be blind and dumb,
When in some future accolade of space
The blind wind comes a-thrusting at my face!

Glenn Ward Dresbach

A Cock Crows Near the Desert

A cock crows near the desert;
The faint cry comes from far
And goes to misted moonlight
Against the morning star.

Some sleeping ranch-house wakens
Not to the cry long-drawn
Through the thin airs of silver
Tinted far off with dawn.

But something in me rises

In spirit with the cry,
With arms spread out in silence,
Lonely against the sky

These are my arms out-spreading
Where the dried grasses toss
On this hill—this my shadow,
On moonlight, like a cross!

O dream, or soul, or spirit,
Whatever you may be,
To what dawn do I bear you—
To what do you bear me?

Edith Miniter

Purple Window Glass

The Squire's house, we call it,
It dominates the street;
Double front roomed, with a majestic front door,
Mansard roof, with a balustraded lookout
(Nothing particular to see),
Sneeringly careless of front yard,
Jealously guarding a vast depth of back garden,
Serene it stands and dominates the street.

The Aristocrat of the Hill, born there,
Felt inordinately proud of purple window glass,
Purple window glass, he saw it as he came up the
street,
Bearing a parcel—a perfectly polite parcel—
Marrons glaces, or a printed book,
Even a box of cigars a gentleman might bring—
But I wish he might now see the parcels
Brought to the house of the purple windows
By those who live in it.

Women, toggled in bronze shoes,
But they fetch bundle kindling,
And they fetch potatoes quite brazenly,
In at the sacred front door they fetch them,
And I don't know but it's just as well.

When the house was for sale they bought it,
Black visaged, lately from over seas,
They had money to buy it,
And right after they moved in more of the windows
 turned purple,
No one could understand it, their turning purple,
The Aristocrat of the Hill, passing by to a humbled
 dwelling on a by street,
Could not believe his eyes, thought it a trick,
But there they gleamed; more and more of them purple.

These newcomers have an Irish name, but an Oriental
 complexion,
A great many little children look from the purple
 windows,
Where were no children since the Aristocrat 69 years
 back

Mothers screech from the purple windows at
 their children,
They tell them not to fall, not to wet their
 feet,
Not to play with inferior children,
As mothers have done since the beginning of
 time;
The children test the pavement with the nose,
Wade in snow drifts,
“Halloo” to Armenians,
As children have always done.

Gossip is rife about the dwellers in the house
of purple windows,
“The girl who married the Italian—you
know—it was just in time”—
(Her child is a massive youngster who floors
most of the others)
“Her sister would marry a Jew—the Priest
refused her confession”—
They are up at 5 a. m., light streams through
the purple windows,
Men-folk hustle down the street, to earn the
bread of their children,
Women bare breasts to their babes, the while
rating the oldsters,
A pedlar’s team stops, bananas and oranges
go in,
A child comes out eating a banana, a picture
of health,
That Aristocrat of the Hill, all of his children
was one,
A daughter, a spinster daughter, deaf to all
words, even love words,
He is sad to see the fate of the house with the
purple windows,
So is she sad—his daughter—
But I don’t know but it’s just as well.

Life dwells there, love dwells there,
A second and third generation dwell there,
And look forth from the purple windows,

Working for the city, voting for the city,
Growing up to think and work and vote for
the city,
To support libraries, school gardens,
settlement centres,
To approve of clean sidewalks, school house
flags, an electric lighted statehouse,
All things that appeal to the well-to-do immigrant,
And not to the decadent Aristocrat of the Hill.

That it is sold and bought, house of the purple window
glass,
I don't know but it's just as well.

Georgia Currier Nyman

And Autumn Passes

The golden-girdled bee, pursued by breath
Of veering breezes, pierced by sudden cold,
With wings benumbed by frost-elves, has grown old.
The while sly sprites are scheming for his death,
And Autumn passes.

To drooping dahlia's heart, he feebly crawls,
He gropes for vanished sweets, while torpor creeps
Still nearer, till too silently he sleeps.
On futile wings, from shivering flower, he falls!
And Autumn passes.

Ethel Van Cise

San Diego Bay

BY DAY—

A great blue pond
Half-encircled by violet hills;
Gray frogs of destroyers waiting at the edges
To swallow up the little launches
That skim over the water.

BY NIGHT—

A velvet curtain, blue-black,
Streaked with long slender banners that glisten
As they hang under lights on ships;
And studded with low-set twin stars
That twinkle and vanish.

And, high over Loma
The crescent moon
And evening star.

Sarah Bixby Smith

My Coyote

I never see that hill
Where now high bill-boards
Spoil the sky,
But I see the lone coyote
That my child eyes saw
Still poised upon that crest.
I little thought that day
That he had come to stay
And hide himself away
In some corner of my brain,
Whence he would come today
To that city-threatened hill
And lope along the sky-line
In the West.

Winifred Heath

To a Certain Poet

They call to me, your lovely lyric words,
Soft as the whispered song of waking birds
And mystic as the surge of moonlit seas.

You speak a dear delight in fragile things,
A sunbeam or the glint on fluttering wings,
And yours is all the wonder of the world.

Yet—sometimes through the music of your song
Wails the dim anguish of an ancient wrong
And sorrow such as Eve must once have known.

And as I hear I know that you have part
With that oft-broken thing, the woman-heart.
That all your quick'ning words shot through with light
Were born in loneliness and a slow night.

Lois Atkins

Hill-Charm

In deep serenity my hills recline
 Within the cushioned hollow of the sea
 And sky. In chastened grace they sing to me
A song as subtly perfumed as the fine
Curves of a woman's body,—every line
 A tuned expression of divinity
 That breathes its charm aloud and beckons me
From indoor plodding up to sun-clad pine.

And then with nuzzling joy I trace my hills
 Through crevices of jewelled, smiling dew
 Where crickets drum their wings in raucous glee,
And every velvet mood of nature fills
 My eager body, till I seek anew
 Her wind-kissed breasts in lover's ecstasy!

Jack Hyatt, Jr.

Prayer

Dear Lord I pray
Do not take away
The joy this brings
My love of little things!

A cripple's smile
A crust of bread
My mother's hand
Upon my head.
Baby's eyes, baby's nose,
Baby's fingers, baby's toes.

Friendly nose of a faithful dog,
Bubbling waters o'er a mossy log.

Above this though, I pray to Thee
To give that greater gift to me,
To write a poem so pure and sweet
That Thou wilt let me kiss Thine Feet.

Lilian White Spencer

To Walt Whitman

A mighty voice once singing of a tree
Declared it uttered joyous leaves.
What would you say, gray poet, could you see
That which this weary sight perceives
Beneath my sickroom window? To the ground
A roistering crabapple bends,
Sprawling with laughter and made drunk by round
Red bellied elves that autumn sends
With spicy wine to stay the tired year
And ruby necklaces to give
The faded summer looks of Christmas cheer
And one who watches will to live.

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Olive Young Traver

Youth Has Not Flown

Youth has not flown when Autumn sings
And leaves dance gaily as they fall;

Youth has not flown when winter brings
A challenge like a bugle call.

When life is pulsing 'neath the earth
And snow birds circle in the sun;
When mid-night is but day's glad birth,
Youth has not flown—it has begun!

J. Corson Miller

Street-Lights

The great, complacent street-lights of the city
Have distant eyes, majestically cold.
They are as bankers who have turned from pity,
To smile on gold.
The proud and smug-lipped street-lights of the city
Have looked on life that withers and grows old.

But I have seen a tiny hearth-fire, leaping
With crackling words of cheer, and cheeks aglow;
Whose friendly hands were ever raised, in keeping
With love-brimmed faces in the long-ago.
You cold, complacent street-lights of the city—
How well you know!

Ethel M. Colson

Fusion

You are my mother yet you seem my child;
My dear, dear child, so loving, frail and sweet.
Your presence brings me duties, tender, mild,
And makes my otherwise childless life complete.
I love you with the love for mothers meet,
Devotion deep as peaceful, undefiled,
And with the love of childhood, ardent, fleet,
That prompts caresses sudden, almost wild.

I serve you now as once you cared for me,

As once I tried to aid you now you aid,
In your dear efforts mine of old I see,
Though of your striving mine is but the shade.
Yet in my love and service they are one—
Your long-past youth, my youth so lately gone.

Mary Sinton Leitch

To Barbara

I thought to walk with you the shining way
 Of youth, but you are sped
 So fleetly far ahead
I cannot follow, yet your laughter spills
 Upon me from the blue, the distant, hills.
I tread on winter's withered leaves, you trip on flowers
 of May.

I hear young comrades hail you on the heights
 With gay, exuberant song:
 To them your joys belong,
 Your triumphs;—for your youth is youth's alone;—
 And yet your failures you have made my own:
Oh be your doubts, your sorrows, mine—and theirs be
 your delights!

Enough that when beset by sudden fears
 You stay your flying feet
 To walk with me, my sweet!
 With youth's bright wine you cannot fill the cup
 Of age, my yearning hands are holding up,
Yet not in vain I hold it, for you fill it with your tears.

Paul S. Nickerson

The Betrothal

What did he say—dear mother!—

By the gate where the roses blow?

Go ask it of another;

I do not know.

In silence long we lingered

Till my quick heart almost broke;

Then the great awe came soft-fingered,

And he spoke.

And not till he was going

Did I thrill from out the kiss.

How should I words be knowing,

With love like this?

Comment—Birds, Beasts and Flowers

By D. H. Lawrence.

Thomas Seltzer. New York. 1923.

(Conducted by Pauline Barrington)

You tell me I am wrong.

Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong?

I am not wrong.

In this manner Mr. Lawrence begins his first poem, "Pomegranate" in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*. Perhaps there is no one writing today who is discussed with more bitter feeling, more profound emotion, than D. H. Lawrence. Whether the criticism be for or against him, he is conceded by them all to be a poet and a genius, also a great modern writer. Freud discovered the unconscious and Mr. Lawrence is his prophet. The unconscious, the dark mystery of sex is the hard truth that he tries to crack; tearing old beliefs, reticences and taboes to shreds. With insolent courage he throws down his challenge to all manner of quackery; baffling the stupid and those who have not the courage to look at the hidden truth brought out and aired before their eyes. In this last book of poems, Mr. Lawrence writes of birds, beasts and flowers in his same amazing manner; seeking out the hidden mystery that lies hidden and dark in the very heart of each, whether he be beast or bird, reptile or vine; and we are attracted because of the hidden-dark little mystery in each of us, which is attracted to all mystery. Intellectual curiosity leads to wisdom and this book is full of essential wisdom. To quote from St. Matthew in "The Evangelistic Beasts":

I have been, and I have returned.

I have mounted up on the wings of the morning, and I have dredged down to the zenith's reversal.

This is my way, being man.
Gods may stay in mid-heaven, the Son of Man has climbed to
Whitsun zenith,
But I, Matthew, being man,
Am a traveller back and forth.
So be it.

And this from the "Elephant":

The elephant bells striking low, tong-tong, tong-tong,
To music and queer chanting:
Eonrmous shadow-processions filing on in the flare of fire
In the fume of cocoa-nut oil, in the sweating tropical night,
In the noise of the tom-toms and singers;
Elephants after elephants curl their trunks, vast shadows,
and some cry out
As they approach and salaam, under the dripping fire of
torches
That pale fragment of a prince up there, whose motto is Ich
dien.

D. H. Lawrence is an Englishman. He has written novels and short stories; books of travel, poetry, essays and plays. His descriptions are superlatively beautiful and all his writing has a radiant intensity. His books are not for the childish. They are grown men's meat. They are not pleasant but are often terrifying and revolting in their revelations of sex, of this dark night-consciousness. He writes of the moment beset with struggles and storms of sex. Mr. Lawrence says, "A novel is supposed to be a mere record of emotion-adventure, flounderings in feelings—also a thought adventure, if it is to be anything complete." His books are without beginnings or endings, yet emotion, flounderings, feelings and adventure . . . the gentle reader, out of all the disgust and horror, at seeing torn away the mask, which man ties so carefully over the

world he does not wish to see, finds the only thing he has to fear on earth . . . is himself. It has been said genius is a little mad, it may be so but the rest of us are so abysmally stupid.

You tell me I am wrong.

Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong?

I am not wrong.

And perhaps he is right. Who knows?

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Vachel Lindsay, Collected Poems.
The Macmillan Company, 1923.

Two memories that I have of Vachel Lindsay symbolize to me the work that he has done and the contribution that he has made to American letters. The first memory is of the poet as the guest of honor at a smoker given by a group of university professors, who were inclined to look upon their honor guest as a person who could sing amusingly and in erratic fashion to the amazement of the under-graduate, but who probably was not quite aware of just what he was attempting to do in his singing. As the evening wore on, I saw a group of professors unable to cope with the poet's swift defenses of meter and method. I heard him quote page after page of Swinburne, of Tennyson, of other nineteenth century metrists. And I saw the conviction gradually form in the minds of his auditors that here was a man who might be academic if he would, a poet who was what he was because he believed himself to be a voice crying in the wilderness of minds closed to the usual and of ears deaf to the rhythms of their daily life. No one could doubt that he was both conscious and purposive in his singing. The other memory which always comes back to me is of the poet as he stood before a large group of New England college girls who were quite determinedly bearing themselves as girls from our best families. And after fifteen minutes I saw those girls forgetting that they were perfect ladies and singing and shouting the bizarre rhythms doled out to them by Vachel Lindsay. No one can read the prose work of Vachel Lindsay or the preface to his *Collected Poems* without realizing that he is, first of all, a man who knows what he is about. He perceives in the moving pictures of today a continuation of the ancient art of picture writing, and he believes that the true art of the moving picture will only be achieved when the truths of the ancient art have been again comprehended. He has found in the chanted lyric of the Greeks a model for new verse. He has

seen in the older English poetry the principles which he would call into a new being and a more vivid existence. Above all, he has believed in the permanence of beauty and in the supreme achievement of man as his ability to snatch beauty from ever changing circumstance. The famous speech at the realtors' banquet would have found a sympathetic interpreter had Vachel Lindsay given it rhythm. For with Vachel Lindsay, at least in so far as he is represented in his earlier and more individual work, there is no subtly expressed yearning for things beyond, no glossing over of American enthusiasms. He has his attention attracted by those who shout what they have to say. He is capable of rejoicing in 100% Americans, in "Disciples," in the Salvation Army, in college yells, in Bryan, in the shouts of the train caller, in all the unrationalized enthusiasms of the tired business man. More than this, Vachel Lindsay has made all of us hear more than we used to hear. He has transmuted noise into the rhythms of life that can be comprehended, whether or no they have meaning beyond themselves. But this transmutation has been effected for only a limited number of those outside his audience. In spite of his own expressed desire to appeal also to the inner ear and in spite of his instructions to his readers to read poetry first in a whisper, it remains true that to read Vachel Lindsay and to hear him are not the same thing. There has been for generations a search for a notation which shall make reading poetry a communicable art. But Vachel Lindsay has not been much more successful in his attempts than have earlier searchers. And it is, I think, true that those who are the poet's most earnest advocates are those who have the memory of his own chanting of *The Congo*, and of *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven*, and of *The Chinese Nightingale*, and of *The Santa Fe Trail*, and of those other poems, which always come back tinged with the meaning given by the poet's own peculiar twanging chant. As to the permanency of the value of

enthusiasm rhythmically expounded in picturesque idiom, judgment need not be pronounced. As to the value of hearing with one's ears what there is to hear no poet can doubt. As to the interest that the curious figure of the poet and tramp and evangelist of beauty has had for this generation this collected edition of his poetry must give evidence.

—*Lily B. Campbell.*

Books Received

Tulips and Chimneys by E. E. Cummings. Thomas Seltzer, Publisher, New York. An individual volume by one of the foremost of the younger poets.

A Dinner of Herbs, by Nancy Barr Mavity. Thomas Seltzer, Publisher, New York. A volume of much charm, singing of American womanhood.

Portsmouth and Other Poems, by Benjamin Collins Woodbury. Boston. A group of strong poems, very human in their appeal.

Leland Stanford Kemnitz of Detroit offers, through THE BOOKFELLOWS, a prize of one hundred dollars for the best sonnet or group of sonnets submitted before April 1, 1924. The judges will be John Erskine and William Griffith of New York, the former Professor of English Literature at Columbia University and President of the Poetry Society of America, and the latter Editor of Current Opinion. There are no restrictions as to the number of poems that may be submitted by each contestant. Preference will be given to the work of those whose verse has less frequently been placed before the public. The prize winning sonnet and such others as may, with the consent of the authors, be chosen for that purpose, will be published in book form in manner worthy of the contents. For conditions of the contest write to Flora Warren Seymour, Clerk, 4917 Blackstone Avenue, Chicago.

PARNASSUS, a magazine of Poetry, will not be just another poetry magazine. It will be a concert hall where the poets will play their music. There will be a new performance with every issue. In PARNASSUS will be played the music of the old poetry as well as the music of the new. The first issue of PARNASSUS will be published in January, 1924. Editor: J. Nolan Vincent; Associate Editor: Jack Brady.